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Daily Highlights

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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General expresses relief and satisfaction after successful recovery of American pilot shot down last week in Bosnia; Bosnian Serbs continue to hold 146 United Nations personnel hostage.

* UNHCR reports deteriorating humanitarian situation in Sarajevo; United Nations convoy comes under heavy attack north of city.

* Security Council Committee appeals for information on violations of mandatory arms embargo against Liberia.

* Member States owed United Nations $2.75 billion as of 31 May; $900 million owed to regular budget and $1.85 billion owed to peace-keeping.

* Preparatory Committee for Fiftieth Anniversary establishes initial list of speakers for General Assembly's Special Commemorative Meeting

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today expressed relief and satisfaction regarding the successful recovery of the American pilot shot down last week over Serb-controlled territory in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He expressed continued concern about United Nations peace-keepers still held hostage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and reiterated his call for their immediate release.

A United Nations spokesman said a total of 146 United Nations personnel were still being detained or blockaded by the Bosnian Serbs, while another 86 peace-keepers were being blockaded by Bosnian Government forces. The Bosnian Serbs released a total of 111 peace-keepers yesterday.

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The military situation in Sarajevo was "active" yesterday, but the fighting was less intense today, according to a United Nations spokesman. More than 1,800 firing incidents were reported over a 24-hour period. Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation continued to deteriorate. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) today carried the last food stocks from its airport warehouses into Sarajevo, and the city bakery was expected to run out of wheat later in the day. As of tomorrow, aid distributions would only meet 15 per cent of requirements.

A Norwegian convoy being escorted by Pakistani peace-keepers was attacked today in an area south-west of Tuzla and north of Sarajevo, the spokesman said. Six rounds were fired at the convoy from heavy weapons. The Pakistani troops returned fire with machine-guns, but there were no reports of casualties.

Croatia was generally calm today, with the exception of Sector South, the spokesman went on to say. Considerable shelling was reported in that Sector.

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The Security Council Committee established under resolution 985 (1995) has appealed for any information on violations or suspected violations of the mandatory arms embargo against Liberia. The appeal was addressed to individuals as well as national and international non-governmental organizations. It asked that they forward any relevant information to their own governments or to the governments concerned, and to the Committee.

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As of 31 May, Member States owed the United Nations a total of $2.75 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, some $900 million was for the regular budget and $1.85 billion was for peace-keeping.

The United States -- the largest debtor -- owed $527 million to the regular budget and $652 to peace-keeping. The Russian Federation owed $41 million to the regular budget and $558 million to peace-keeping.

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The Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations has drawn lots to establish the initial list of speakers for the General Assembly's Special Commemorative Meeting. The Meeting will take place from 22 to 24 October and will be divided into six sessions. As Host Country, the United States is the first speaker on the list for the first session. The next four speakers listed are Ukraine, Jordan, Sri Lanka and New Zealand.

The list of speakers for each session is arranged according to rank, following the established practice of the Assembly and the order resulting from the selection process. Heads of State are accorded first priority, followed by vice-presidents, crown princes/princesses, heads of Government, highest ranking officials of the Holy See and Switzerland as observer States, and Palestine in its capacity as observer, ministers, permanent representatives and other observers.

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